

Sac Bee

9/4/96

The Peripheral Canal

Re "You Asked," Aug. 5: The Peripheral Canal and other potential diversion facilities are being discussed by agencies that compose Calfed Bay-Delta Program as a means of transporting more Northern California water to the corporate farms in the Tulare Basin and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

The Department of Water Resources accelerated its land-buying activities with the signing of the Delta Accord in December 1994 in anticipation of a future, yet-unnamed Delta facility.

In 1996, the Legislature passed AB 900, which will come in front of voters this fall. If voters approve this pork barrel bill, they will pay for the approach work for the future Delta diversion facility desired by the Department of Water Resources, State Water Project, its contractors and the MWD. Don't look for the Delta alternative to be put to the people for a vote of approval.

Northern Californians must wake up. If San Joaquin Valley and Tulare Basin corporate farms get the water they want first, that will force the Sacramento Valley and Delta farmers and other Central and Northern Californians to look at the North Coast for their water needs. That would pit

Northern Californians against Northern Californians.

All this while San Joaquin and Tulare Basin corporate farms, the SWP, and MWD leadership will be sitting comfortably with their subsidized water supplies guaranteed and continuing to build more political and economic clout. All this at the expense of Central and Northern California's origin counties, their future generations, economic viability, water and anadromous fish resources. It could be a situation like Mono Lake and Owens Valley all over again.

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